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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

NORTHLAND

During recent months DOC staff have been involved mainly with plans for remedial and maintenance work on a number of reserves. Maiki Hill at Russell has suffered severe erosion from heavy winter rainfall and increased tourist traffic. It is one of the most significant and frequently visited tourist sites in the Bay of Islands. Initially a terraces pa, it is better known as the location of the flagstaff chopped down by Hone Heke and his cohorts as a symbolic gesture against British imperialism. Remains of the original terracing have been worn and washed down to bedrock in places, so we propose to construct a pathway around the side of the hill, hopefully at a gradient that will allow wheelchair access, and repair and re-grass the terraces.

Conservation proposals have also been produced for Arai-te Uru Reserve in the South Head of Hokianga harbour; this time by the local community. The headland is of spiritual significance to Ngapuhi and from 1832 it served for many years as a signal station to direct ships across the Hokianga bar. Remnants of the signal station and terraces that contained the houses of the harbour master and his assistants still exist and there are excellent early photographs of these structures. Improved parking, picnic facilities, vegetation management and interpretive panels are planned to enhance public appreciation of the historic values of the headland and the dramatic view that it provides of the harbour.

Co-operation between diverse conservancy specialists is continuing to improve. DOC possum extermination have recently combined forces with historic resource staff to ensure that archaeological sites will not be affected by the erection of possum-proof fences across the North Cape and Cape Brett peninsulas. There is also improved consultation with some *iwi* and *hapu*. A successful *hui* was held in June with Ngati Hine of the Kaikou Valley to explain how their *wahi tapu* and archaeological sites can be protected under current legislation. This will be followed up in the near future by a weekend workshop on site recording. If DOC archaeologists are to follow a Head office dictum that the focus of future work must be on the DOC Estate, then we can at least foster site recording groups outside it - especially those composed of *tangata whenua*.

Subdivisions and pine plantations are still creeping over the Northland landscape. Simon Best and Clayton Fredericksen have completed an archaeological survey of a vast area of Karikari peninsula which Landcorp is subdividing into large farm blocks and Clayton is currently inspecting afforestation proposals in Honeymoon Valley. The Karikari project, in conjunction with previous work by Caroline Phillips and John Coster, has almost completed coverage of the peninsula, leaving only strips of DOC land to be surveyed.

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Finally, there are proposals to hold a ceremony at Ruapekapeka Pa early in the New Year to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the last battle in the wars of the North. Any NZAA members on holiday in Northland would be most welcome.

Joan Maingay, DOC

BAY OF PLENTY

Normal archaeological and conservancy work is on-going in the Bay of Plenty but complicated by the large amount of development occurring in the region. This is resulting in extensive damage to archaeological sites, much of which is done without authorities or resource consents. The DOC conservancy archaeologist is currently inspecting damage to a major site (off the estate) at the rate of about once a week. Representatives from the Trust and DOC have been making a number of visits to district and regional councils in order to address some of these issues. The Trust, DOC and Tauranga District Council are looking at co-funding a large scale survey of the Papamoa dune middens to address the large amount of site destruction in that area and what conditions should be placed on developers.

Other work that has been happening in the Bay of Plenty includes the surveying of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park by the conservancy archaeologist prior to removal of exotic forest. The inspection of historic resources on Lathans Track, Awakeei, has also been carried out; an authority obtained for the destruction of a historic rubbish pit associated with the power station at Okere Falls Scenic Reserve as part of the car park development. The authority has monitoring and research conditions. Rick McGovern-Wilson continues on-going work on the Bay of Plenty midden project and he, Linda Bowers and Ray Hooker are all carrying out various mitigation and conservation work in the area. Bruce Mcfadgen (S and R, DOC) and Warren Gumbley have been up in the Bay visiting Johnson's Trust subdivision, Papamoa, and investigating dune midden / gardening sites.

Kim Tatton, DOC

EAST COAST

Victoria Grouden has recently completed a survey of a block of land proposed for forestry development. This survey was a requirement of a council consent on the recommendation of NZ Historic Places Trust, DOC and Te Runanga o Turanganui a Kiwa. A total of 27 sites were located.

The Department of Conservation is responsible for a museum at Aniwanui, Te Urewera National Park. This museum contains a range of nationally significant material and Nick Tupara has recently completed a Conservation Survey Report on the artefacts. A condition report has also been completed for Colin

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McCahon's Te Urewera Tryptch which is held in the museum.

Conservation work on a 1926 trailer used for transporting heavy equipment for the hydro electric power station has been initiated by Jack Fry. The trailer currently sits outside the Aniwhaniwa Visitor's Centre.

Gordon Jackman and Mike Smith have recently completed an excavation of a building site in Gisborne. During site development an adze was located and a range of pre-1900 European material located during excavation.

Pam Bain, DOC

TARANAKI

With all the doom and gloom of site destruction which is occurring round the country it is pleasing to report on something positive.

In April an application to quarry a series of lahar, just south of Okato, was lodged with the South Taranaki District Council. However, the area these hills occupy is one of the most important archaeological and historical areas along the Taranaki coast. Nearly all the lahar in the area of the application show archaeological features and are named. It was here that the Nga Mahanga leader, Komene, was centred, his main pa being Pukehoe. Numerous taonga, most notably the stone sculpture Hine O Tanga and a carved pataka door, have been found in the area. On three of the lahar petroglyphs occur. In the late 1850s Komene's people erected a flour mill in the area which, along with his village, was destroyed by troops in 1860.

The area has been farmed by the same family since 1902 and large areas of the property have never been ploughed.

Working with the members of the Komene whanau an on-site meeting was held with the Council and the applicant, the outcome of which was that he agreed to abandon his proposal to quarry the area. This was a particularly pleasing result.

Alastair Buist and Hip Fenton are continuing with their on-going project of field checking in North Taranaki.

Kelvin Day, Taranaki Museum

WELLINGTON

As part of a further restructuring of historic resources in the Department of Conservation, six historic resources positions in the Science and Research Division have been reduced to four. One current member of staff is to be re-

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assigned to the Head Office Historic Resources policy unit and a vacant position (formerly held by Dr S. Bulmer) is lost. The Department has at the same time confirmed its involvement with the NZAA Site Recording Scheme. In a further development, Science and Research Division has obtained a GIS package (ArcView2) for use with the archaeology database.

Fieldwork undertaken by Science and Research archaeologists in the last few months includes the mapping of Pukerangiora Pa (North Taranaki), an inspection of Te Horo Stock Tunnel (1880s) at White Cliffs (North Taranaki), a site survey of Somes Island (Wellington Harbour), inspections for the Taupo rock art project, mapping at Opepe Historic Reserve (Taupo), and exploratory excavations at Papamoa (Tauranga) for NZHPT. Kevin Jones has undertaken aerial photography of historic places in parts of Hawkes Bay, Horowhenua, Wairarapa Coast and Wellington.

Kahu o Te Rangi Whaling Station on Kapiti Island has been mapped by Kevin Jones and Conservancy staff. The site dates to the late 1830s and is spread out along 140 metres of foreshore. It has some 19 terraces, stone fireplaces (including one stone-edged hearth for a whare), a grave, a hillside track and 5-6 trypot stands. It is one of the largest and best preserved of all European settlements of this period in New Zealand.

Kevin Jones and Aiden Challis have been advising the Katherine Mansfield Birthplace Society's Restoration Committee on the options for restoring and reconstructing the leanto, which contained the much publicised 'Katherine Mansfield toilet'. Architectural advice was that there was no room in the leanto for both a toilet and a wash copper. The copper was found, unexpectedly, to have been located in the scullery in the main part of the house. An obscure 1907 building specification records its presence there and its demolition.

Dr Henry Cleere (ICOMOS) made an informal visit to New Zealand in late March 1995. His visit was co-ordinated by Science and Research Division. Dr Cleere emphasised the likely significance of prehistoric archaeological landscapes and first contact sites, in particular, to the World Heritage List.

Susan Forbes has been doing a site survey at Lake Horowhenua in association with the local iwi.

Tony Walton, DOC

OTAGO

The winter months generally bring fieldwork to more or less a standstill in the deep south, not surprisingly, and this is reflected in this report. Jill Hamel has been undertaking further work on the Central Otago Rail Trail - a project funded by DOC, who have taken over the corridor where the railway used to

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run and are developing it for outdoor activities such as hiking, horse riding and mountain biking. Peter Bristow has been working on some proposed quarry sites in the Invercargill area for a number of developers.

Peter Petchey continues his work at Macraes Flat, and has recently undertaken a site survey of the area from Murphy's Flat to Stoneburn for Macraes Mining Co. Peter has also visited the Invincible Mine (Wakatipu), Canton Battery and Water Wheel (Waipori) and the Come-in-Time Battery (Bendigo) to prepare Conservation plans for DOC. Finally, he has recently been engaged to survey the early 20th century sluicing operations at Island Block.

Rick McGovern-Wilson has been engaged by ECNZ and Ngai Tahu to undertake preliminary test excavations at the important moa hunter sites of Beaumont and Millers Flat. These sites will be swamped by the dam which ECNZ is proposing to build at Tuapeka Mouth and further more extensive excavations will be probably be undertaken based on the results of these test excavations.

Rick McGovern-Wilson, SouthernArc

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Higham, T.F.G. 1994 "Radiocarbon dating New Zealand prehistory with moa eggshell: Some preliminary results". *Quaternary Geochronology (Quaternary Science Reviews)*, Vol. 13: 163-169.

Abstract:

This paper considers the reliability of radiocarbon dates of moa egg shell from archaeological sites in New Zealand. In the light of certain problems associated with alternative materials, it is suggested that eggshell is a reliable material which survives well in archaeological contexts, possesses a minimal inbuilt age and usually dates the event in question most accurately. Nine preliminary results are presented from 4 sites; Onenui (Hawke's Bay), Shag Mouth, Pleasant River (both North Otago) and Warrington (Dunedin). Radiocarbon dates of eggshell are compared with those of other materials in identical contexts and the differences are found to be statistically insignificant.